

Celebrating the Birth Anniversary of His Royal Highness the Gyalsey Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck



On February 5, His Royal Highness Gyalsey Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck turned one year old. It is such a tremendous joy to witness His Royal Highness grow and lift the hearts and spirits of the people across Bhutan. In line with the celebrations all across the country, we offer our sincere wishes and prayers for a long and healthy life for His Royal Highness the Gyalsey.

With our hearts filled with joy and the Bhutanese New Year, *Losar*, just around the corner, we look forward to yet another great year of working with our most valued partners and contributing to the development of Bhutan. This month, we share updates from some of our projects and spotlight one of our local partners, the Samdrup Jongkhar Initiative (SJI).

Research Grants Awarded for Public Health



Dr. MaryAlice Lee, faculty at Yale School of Public Health, leading Health Services Research Methods workshop for medical professionals in Bhutan.

As part of our continued support to build the capacity of health professionals in Bhutan by developing research and scientific writing skills, we supported a four-day authors' and reviewers' workshop led by the *Bhutan Health Journal* under the Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan (KGUMSB). The *Bhutan Health Journal*, the country's first scientific medical journal, covers a wide range of areas, such as clinical findings, medical education, nursing and midwifery, traditional medicine, public health, health policy, and perspectives from various fields of health sciences envisioned to improve health care service in Bhutan.

[Read more about this](#)

Improving Health Care in Our Communities



The Bumthang District Hospital team with the Khangthang community members during the Nomad Health Camp in November 2016.

As part of our plan to expand the Public Health and [Emergency Medical Services](#) programs to community and regional hospitals, we are pleased to support the Bumthang District Hospital in north central Bhutan. The 40-bed hospital in Bumthang provides integrated primary health-care facilities to the local community and offers traditional medicine services. However, meeting the increasing demands of the growing community in Bumthang with better health services, accessibility, and clinical efficiency is a challenge for the hospital. In response, the Bhutan Foundation provided grants to the hospital in November 2016 and January 2017 to purchase a utility vehicle, health equipment, and furniture, and to restore and repair the staff complex.

A portion of this amount was also used to conduct the Bumthang Nomad Health Camp. Additionally, the hospital received a separate grant to install an LED sheet in their x-ray room to protect from radiation leakage.

Transitioning to Adult Life: Work, Play, Live, and Love



Special Education Needs teachers and parents work on a "transition dream map" activity to envision a transition strategy for individuals living with disabilities in Bhutan.

The [Ministry of Education](#) and UNICEF organized a week-long training for [special education](#) teachers from all 15 schools that teach children with disabilities in Bhutan. During the January 18-23 training, the Bhutan Foundation organized a session on transition in collaboration with Changangkha Middle Secondary School (CGMSS). The session focused on understanding the need for transition planning and what transition means for children with disabilities. Madam Chimi Lhamo from CGMSS and Ms. Sonam Yangden of the Bhutan Foundation facilitated the session for more than 30 special education teachers in Phuntsholing in southern Bhutan. This training was a follow-up to two trainings on transition that Madam Lhamo and Ms. Yangden attended with Perkins International.

[Read more about this](#)

Partner Spotlight: The Samdrup Jongkhar Initiative (SJI)

The Samdrup Jongkhar Initiative (SJI) is a grassroots project based in Samdrup Jongkhar district in southeastern Bhutan, envisioned by a renowned Buddhist teacher, writer, and filmmaker, Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Norbu, with the underpinning philosophy of self-reliance through self-governance. In essence, it is a Gross National Happiness (GNH) laboratory with the humble aspiration to replicate its experience in other districts and the nation as a whole.



SJI operates under the auspices of the [Lhomon Society](#), a registered civil society organization in Bhutan, with the primary goal of raising living standards of the communities. The project focuses on following major programs:

- **Education and Youth Engagement:** An alternative model of education and curriculum development that integrates principles of Bhutan's development philosophy of GNH.
- **Organic Agriculture:** A program focused on improving food security and self-sufficiency (including nutrition) at the household and community level, protecting soil health and environment, and making farming economically viable. Seed self-reliance and revival of traditional grains are part of the program.

- **Zero Waste:** A program aimed at institutionalizing zero-waste ethos and at bringing waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and other sustainable waste management practices into the governance structure and development agenda of local governments and communities. SJI believes that waste management encompasses the whole gamut of development.
- **Model GNH Village:** An ongoing commemorative dream project of converting a nearby village, Menchari, into a model GNH village to strike a balance between material and other priorities, such as ecological, spiritual, and emotional well being, with youth as its critical partner.
- **SJI Village:** Here, the aspiration is to showcase GNH in practice and to inspire local communities to live in harmony with nature while also sensitively using opportunities offered by modern technology, and which is managed by local youth.

SJI, through its parent organization and 22 other civil society organizations received the National Award of Merit (Gold) from His Majesty the King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck during the National Day celebrations on December 17, 2016. This further validates the project, which enjoys a high level of trust and confidence among its clients.

The Bhutan Foundation continues to support the mission of SJI and supported its System of Rice Intensification project. The success of SJI continues to inspire the rest of the country to adopt practices and consider possibilities in communities to improve lives throughout Bhutan. The Bhutan Foundation looks forward to continuing our partnership with SJI in other areas of focus.

[Learn more about SJI](#)

Upcoming Events



Save the Date: Washington DC Premiere
of Power of the River
March 19, 2017
2:00PM
E Street Cinema
555 11th St NW,
Washington, DC 20004

Join us in San Francisco to celebrate the
Bhutanese New Year on March 4, 2017!

Contact info@bhutanfound.org for more
information.

TAKE ACTION, DONATE TODAY!

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